Ockley Housing Association
Policy on Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour

1. Introduction
Ockley Housing Association (OHA) is dedicated to fostering a safe, secure, and peaceful living environment for all residents. We acknowledge the significant impact that anti-social behaviour (ASB), including hate incidents, can have on individuals and the community. This policy outlines our commitment to addressing ASB in compliance with UK government guidance and best practices, particularly the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and the Housing Ombudsman Service's Complaint Handling Code.

The objectives of this policy are to:
- Prevent ASB through proactive and preventative measures.
- Provide a clear, accessible process for reporting ASB.
- Ensure prompt and effective responses to ASB reports.
- Support and protect victims of ASB.
- Take appropriate action against perpetrators of ASB.
- Promote a culture of respect and community cohesion.

2. Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour
ASB is defined as behaviour that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to others. It can vary in severity and impact, and what may be considered a minor nuisance to some can be deeply distressing to others. Examples include:
- Noise disturbances
- Verbal abuse or threats
- Vandalism and property damage
- Harassment or intimidation
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Littering and fly-tipping
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour
- Hate-related incidents motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on actual or perceived race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion or age. It is the victim who will decide whether they feel an incident is motivated by hostility or prejudice.

To reduce the occurrence of ASB, we may:
- Engage with residents regularly through quarterly meetings with their representatives.
- Install and maintain adequate lighting and security measures.
- Display clear signage outlining community standards and the consequences of ASB.
- Collaborate with local authorities, police, and other relevant agencies.

ASB can only be prevented, however, via active community involvement.

3. Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour
Residents should report ASB by contacting our Managing Agents, Ethical Lettings:
- Email: info@ethical-lettings.com
- Phone: 01483 429157
- In writing: Ethical Lettings CIC, 2nd Floor, Council Offices, The Burys, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HR

Reports should include detailed information about the behaviour, including dates, times, and any witnesses.

Upon receiving a report of ASB, our Managing Agent will:
- Acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days.
- Assess the severity and impact of the behaviour.
- Develop an action plan in consultation with the complainant and the Management Committee. This plan will include specific actions, timelines, and follow-up procedures.

- Maintain confidentiality and handle reports sensitively.

4. Investigation Process
The investigation process involves:
- Collecting evidence (if necessary).
- Interviewing the complainant and, if required, the alleged perpetrator and witnesses.
- Liaising with relevant agencies, such as the police or local council.

The goal is to complete investigations within 40 working days, though this may vary depending on the complexity of the case. We will aim to complete investigations into incidents involving alleged threats or violence within a shorter timeframe.

5. Actions and Sanctions
Based on the investigation findings, in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, actions may include:
- Mediation between the parties involved.
- Issuing warning letters to the perpetrator.
- Implementing Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs).
- Seeking injunctions or other legal remedies.
- Initiating eviction proceedings in severe cases, following due legal process.
- Perpetrators subject to sanctions have the right to appeal decisions. Appeals must be submitted in writing within 14 days of receiving the sanction notice.

6. Support for Victims
We will provide support to victims of ASB, which may include:
- Regular updates on the progress of their complaint.
- Referrals to support services.

7. Resident Responsibilities
Residents are expected to:
- Treat neighbours and Ockley Housing Association representatives with respect.
- Comply with tenancy agreements and community guidelines.
- Report incidents of ASB promptly.

8. Communication and Review of Policy
This policy will be communicated through letters to residents and our website. Subject to overriding legal or regulatory changes, it will remain in effect until an updated policy is formally adopted by the OHA. It will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation or significant incidents. We will regularly monitor ASB cases to ensure:
- The effectiveness of our interventions and resolutions.
- Continuous improvement of our ASB policies and procedures.
- Feedback from residents is incorporated into future policy updates.

The review process will include consultation with residents, our Managing Agent, and relevant stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives are considered.

9. Contact Information
For any queries or further information regarding this policy, please contact Ethical Lettings (see above).